

Congress of Vienna

- The Congress of Vienna was convened in 1815 by the four European powers, which had defeated Napoleon.
- The first goal was to establish a new **balance of power** in Europe, which would prevent imperialism within Europe, such as the Napoleonic Empire, and maintain the peace between the great powers.
- The second goal was to prevent political revolutions, such as the French Revolution, and **maintain the status quo**.
- Disagreement between Russia and Prussia on the one hand, and Britain and Austria on the other about boundary provisions in Eastern Europe led to a threat of renewed hostilities.
- The British enlisted the new French government, which was under control of the restored Bourbon dynasty in the person of King Louis XVIII, as an ally.
- France was invited to send a representative to the Congress of Vienna and was, thereafter, involved as the fifth great power of the Grand Alliance.
 - Agreement was reached avoiding war.
- Prussian boundaries were expanded westward to confront the French with a greater power on their eastern border.
- The Kingdom of the Netherlands, which included both Holland and Belgium, was created for the same reason.
- When that arrangement collapsed and an independent Belgium was recognized, the great powers accomplished their objectives by signing a treaty among themselves in 1837, which guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium and Holland.
 - This treaty remained in effect until 1914.
- There was not another European-wide war for a century.
- When Germany marched into Belgium in 1914, thus violating the neutrality of the Lowlands, the First World War began.
- There were, however, other conflicts in the nineteenth century, such as the Crimean War, the Franco-Austrian War, the Austro-Prussian War, and the Franco-Prussian War.
 - However, these were limited by both time and geography, and did not involve all of the great powers.
- The second goal was to restore "legitimate" or traditional governments to power and to prevent political revolutions. They wanted to make sure that the **status quo** continued to be met.
- This was partially successful in the short term, but was bound to fail in the long term because it opposed the irresistible forces of historical change resulting from modernization.
 - Those irresistible forces took the form of the dual revolutions of liberalism and nationalism.